

Attorney Docket No.: FMCE-P138

Remarks

Reconsideration of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has objected to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.83(a) as not showing every feature which is recited in the claims. In particular, the Examiner contends that the "first side and second side" recited in claim 7, the "device for clamping the cable" recited in claim 9, and the "ring" recited in claim 10 are not shown in the drawings.

Regarding the recitation of "first side and second side" in claim 7, this claim has been amended to specify that the "first side" is the side of the connection system closest to the first location and the "second side" is the side of the connection system closest to the second location. These sides are clearly shown, e.g., in Figure 3. In light of this clarification, applicant submits that an amendment to the drawings to specifically point out the first and second sides is not necessary.

Regarding the recitation of the "device for clamping the cable" in claim 9, this claim has been amended to delete this language.

Regarding the recitation of the "ring" in claim 10, this claim has been amended to change this term to "portion". The "portion" of the alignment guide through which the cable passes is shown in Figure 9 as the right-most end of the alignment guide 16.

Claims 1, 3, 7-10, 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1). In response to this

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rejection, claim 1, on which the remaining rejected claims depend, has been amended to more clearly distinguish the present invention from Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1).

Accordingly, claim 1 now requires that the cable of the loading and unloading assembly be secured between the first and second locations during product loading and unloading operations. In contrast to this arrangement, Le Devehat's loading and unloading system comprises two cables, neither one of which is secured between the first and second locations. The first cable 32 has a first end which is connected to a constant tension means 34 positioned at the first location and a second end which is connected to a connection system 28 mounted on the loading arm 14. The second cable 41 includes a first end which is wound on a winch 42 attached to the connection system 28 and a second end which is connectable to a tube section 43 positioned at the second location.

Thus, instead of using a single cable which is secured between the first and second locations during the product loading and unloading operations, Le Devehat uses a first cable 32 which is secured between the first location and the connection system 28 and a second cable 41 which is secured between the connection system 28 and the second location. This arrangement clearly does not allow the drive winch of the connection system to frictionally engage the cable and drive the connection system along the cable between the first and second locations, as is also required by claim 1.

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Therefore, Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1) does not anticipate claim 1. In addition, since claims 3, 7-10, 12 and 13 depend from claim 1, these claims are not anticipated by Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1) for the reasons stated above.

Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1) in view of Le Devehat (WO 01/04041 A1). However, claims 3 and 4 depend from claim 1. Therefore, to the extent the present rejection is based on the Examiner's assertion that claim 1 is anticipated by Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1), claims 3 and 4 are patentable over any permissible combination of Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1) and Le Devehat (WO 01/04041 A1) for the reasons stated above.

Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1) in view of Vilain (U.S. Patent No. 3,032,082). Claims 5 and 6 have been canceled, but new claims 15 and 16 similar to claims 5 and 6 have been added; and applicant submits that these claims are patentable over any permissible combination of Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1) and Vilain.

In this regard, neither Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1) nor Vilain discloses a loading and unloading assembly having a connection system which is securely connected to a cable that is wound around a pulley positioned at the second location, as is required by claim 15. Although Vilain's loading and unloading system includes a cable 13, 15, 20, 21 which is wound around a pulley 22 positioned at the second location, it does not include a connection system which is securely connected to the cable. Vilain's connection system may be

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considered to be the unnumbered pulley which is mounted to the distal end of the flexible sector 8. However, by its nature this pulley is not securely connected to the cable. Rather, the cable is free to move relative to the pulley.

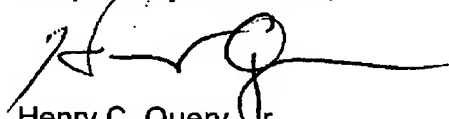
Therefore, new claims 15 and 16 are clearly patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over any permissible combination of Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1) and Vilain.

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1) in view of Dumas (U.S. Patent No. 3,964,512). However, claim 11 depends from claim 1. Therefore, to the extent the present rejection is based on the Examiner's assertion that claim 1 is anticipated by Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1), claim 11 is patentable over any permissible combination of Le Devehat (WO 02/22491 A1) and Dumas for the reasons stated above.

New independent claim 14 comprises many of the limitations of claim 1 discussed above. New claims 17-19 depend from claim 15. Therefore, these claims are submitted as being allowable over the prior art cited by the Examiner.

For the foregoing reasons, claims 1, 3, 4 and 7-19 are submitted as allowable. Favorable action is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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